



PROCLAMATION

Countdown to Kindergarten and Beyond: Learning Begins at Birth Public Awareness and Community Engagement Campaign April 2015 – August 2015

WHEREAS, the Clarkston Early Learning Network (CELN), created in 2012, is a network of individuals and over 25 agencies and groups committed to quality early learning in formal and informal settings for Clarkston's diverse families and their children birth to age 8; and

WHEREAS, the Clarkston Early Learning Network seeks to build public awareness about the importance of a child's early years, the important role families play, and the importance of home language; and

WHEREAS, the Clarkston Early Learning Network seeks to foster connections between families, early learning programs, school, public officials, and the community; and

WHEREAS, there are infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in Clarkston who need and deserve caring adults who will talk, sing, and read to them to promote nurturing relationships, early language and literacy; and

WHEREAS, birth to age 3 are critical years in the development of language skills; and

WHEREAS, researchers at Stanford University found that the amount of talk directed at a child predicted the size of their vocabulary as early as 24 months and other research indicates that children in low income homes hear 10 million fewer words by age 4 than children in high-income homes and that this gap is difficult to close; and

WHEREAS, the more words a child hears from caring adults between birth and age 5, the better he or she will learn over a lifetime; and

WHEREAS, research shows that reading aloud is the single most important thing you can do to help a child prepare for reading and learning; and

WHEREAS, children who learn two languages display greater concentration, have a better grasp of the basic structure of language, and may have an easier time understanding math and science symbols later in school; and

WHEREAS, the more a child hears during their first years in their native language, the better prepared they will be to learn English and other subjects when they enter school; and

WHEREAS, children who participate in quality home visiting and early learning programs, including Pre-K and Head Start, are likely to be more successful in school; and

WHEREAS, Clarkston families, early learning providers, and others committed to young children have worked together over four years to promote the importance of learning in the early years, home language, parents as first teachers, quality early learning for every child, family engagement, and a successful transition into Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten; and

WHEREAS, the Clarkston Early Learning Network is bringing together families and community partners to plan activities, workshops, and distribute literacy and language materials and books to promote early learning and school transition. Such activities include: April 18, Early Learning and Family Resource Day, Clarkston Library, 2 to 4 p.m. May 9, Third Annual Tell Me a Story! Culture and Language Festival at the Clarkston Community Center, 2 to 5 p.m., Family Leadership Workshop, March – June 2015, and workshops such as Every Child Ready to Read for child care teachers and other caregivers at various venues, including Partnership for Community Action Head Start; and

WHEREAS, CDF Action is the recipient of a W.K. Kellogg Foundation early learning and family engagement award to fund a Clarkson Families Decide initiative that includes an Early Learning Community Trust process, Family Leadership Workshops, and the Countdown to Kindergarten and beyond campaign and a recipient of the

Georgia Early Education Alliance (GEEARS) for Ready Students Summer Reading Club Replication Award,
and

NOW THEREFORE, I, Mayor Ted Terry, on behalf of the City of Clarkston and its City Council, do hereby
proclaim April 2015 through August 2015 as the Countdown to Kindergarten and Beyond: Learning Begins at
Birth Campaign in Clarkston and encourage citizens to support early learning initiatives for our children.

***DATED** this 7th day April, 2015.*

Mayor Ted Terry, City of Clarkston

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

Seal

